

House Bill 215

By: Representatives Davis of the 109th, Mayo of the 91st, Casas of the 103rd, Neal of the 1st,
Sellier of the 136th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

To amend Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the "Quality Basic Education Act," so as to enact the "Graduating Everyone Matters Act"; to establish three diploma options for high school students; to provide for course requirements for each diploma option; to provide for applicability; to provide for statutory construction; to revise provisions relating to testing requirements for graduation purposes; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the "Quality Basic Education Act," is amended by adding a new Code section to read as follows:
"20-2-134.

(a) This Code section shall be known and may be cited as the 'Graduating Everyone Matters Act.'

(b) The State Board of Education shall establish the following three diploma options for high school students: general diploma, career/vocational/technical diploma, and college preparation diploma.

(c) The competencies and uniformly sequenced core curriculum established by the State Board of Education pursuant to Code Section 20-2-140 shall incorporate the following specific course requirements for each diploma option as follows:

(1) GENERAL DIPLOMA. To be eligible to receive a general diploma, a student may graduate in 3 years and shall:

(A) Have a minimum of 18 credits which shall include:

(i) Three credits in English/language arts;

(ii) Two credits in mathematics;

(iii) One credit in personal finance and banking;

(iv) Two credits in science;

- 27 (v) Two credits in social studies;
 28 (vi) Two credits in health/physical education;
 29 (vii) One credit in fine arts or foreign language;
 30 (viii) One credit in career/vocational/technical;
 31 (ix) One credit in computer applications; and
 32 (x) Three electives; and
 33 (B) Have completed 75 hours of community service approved by the local board of
 34 education in accordance with State Board of Education guidelines;
 35 (2) CAREER/VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL DIPLOMA. To be eligible to receive a
 36 career/vocational/technical diploma, a student shall:
 37 (A) Have a minimum of 22 credits which shall include:
 38 (i) Four credits in English/language arts;
 39 (ii) Three credits in mathematics;
 40 (iii) One credit in personal finance and banking;
 41 (iv) Two credits in science;
 42 (v) Two credits in social studies;
 43 (vi) One credit in health/physical education;
 44 (vii) One credit in fine arts or foreign language;
 45 (viii) Three credits in career/vocational/technical;
 46 (ix) One credit in computer applications; and
 47 (x) Three electives; and
 48 (B) Have completed 100 hours of community service approved by the local board of
 49 education in accordance with State Board of Education guidelines; and
 50 (3) COLLEGE PREPARATION DIPLOMA. To be eligible to receive a college preparation
 51 diploma, a student shall:
 52 (A) Have a minimum of 23 credits which shall include:
 53 (i) Four credits in English/language arts;
 54 (ii) Three credits in mathematics;
 55 (iii) One credit in personal finance and banking;
 56 (iv) Three credits in science;
 57 (v) Three credits in social studies;
 58 (vi) Two credits in foreign language;
 59 (vii) One credit in health/physical education;
 60 (viii) One credit in fine arts or foreign language;
 61 (ix) One credit in career/vocational/technical;
 62 (x) One credit in SAT preparation; and

- _____ (xi) Three electives; and
- _____ (B) Have completed 100 hours of community service approved by the local board of education in accordance with State Board of Education guidelines.
- _____ (d) Only students pursuing the college preparation diploma option shall be permitted to use the school code for purposes of SAT administration.
- _____ (e) This Code section shall apply to students entering ninth grade beginning in the 2009-2010 school year; provided, however, that students who are in the tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grade beginning in the 2009-2010 school year may elect to stay under applicable State Board of Education graduate requirements existing as of June 30, 2009, or to choose one of the three diploma options under this Code section.
- _____ (f) Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to conflict with requirements for earning a special education diploma pursuant to subsection (c) of Code Section 20-2-281."

SECTION 2.

Said chapter is further amended by revising subsections (a) and (c) of Code Section 20-2-281, relating to assessment of effectiveness of educational programs, as follows:

"(a) The State Board of Education shall adopt a student assessment program consisting of instruments, procedures, and policies necessary to implement the program and shall fund all costs of providing and scoring such instruments, subject to appropriation by the General Assembly. Each local school system may elect to administer, with state funding, nationally norm-referenced instruments in reading, mathematics, science, or social studies in grade three, four, or five and in grade six, seven, or eight, subject to available appropriations, with assistance to such school systems by the State Board of Education with regard to administration guidance, scoring, and reporting of such assessments. The State Board of Education shall review, revise, and upgrade the quality core curriculum. Following the adoption of this revised curriculum, the State Board of Education shall contract for development of criterion-referenced competency tests to measure the quality core curriculum. Such tests in English and language arts, mathematics, and reading shall be administered annually to students in grades one through eight, and such tests in science and social studies shall be administered annually to students in grades three through eight. This action shall be completed according to a schedule established by the State Board of Education. A ~~curriculum-based~~ curriculum based assessment shall be administered in grade 11 for graduation purposes; provided however, that beginning with the 2009-2010 school year, this shall only apply to students pursuing a college preparation diploma in accordance with Code Section 20-2-134. Writing assessments shall be administered to students in grades three, five, eight, and 11. The writing assessments shall provide students

and their parents with performance outcome measures resulting from the administration of such tests."

"(c) The State Board of Education shall have the authority to condition the awarding of a high school diploma to a student upon achievement of satisfactory scores on instruments or tests adopted and administered by the state board pursuant to subsection (a) of this Code section; provided however, that beginning with the 2009-2010 school year, this shall only apply to students pursuing a college preparation diploma in accordance with Code Section 20-2-134. The state board is authorized and directed to adopt regulations providing that any disabled child, as defined by the provisions of this article, shall be afforded opportunities to take any test adopted by the state board as a condition for the awarding of a high school diploma. Said regulations shall further provide for appropriate accommodations in the administration of such test. Said regulations shall further provide for the awarding of a special education diploma to any disabled student who is lawfully assigned to a special education program and who does not achieve a passing score on said test or who has not completed all of the requirements for a high school diploma but who has nevertheless completed his or her Individualized Education Program."

SECTION 3.

All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.